

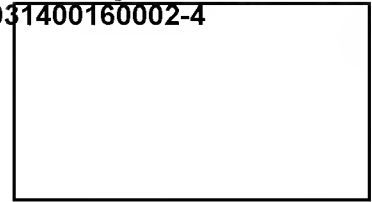


Director of
Intelligence

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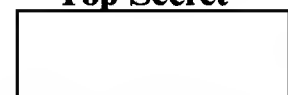


National Intelligence Daily (Cable)

18 May 1979

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BRIEFS AND COMMENTS

USSR: Kirilenko's Status

During the past month there have been signs that some members of the Soviet establishment are trying to damage the image Andrey Kirilenko has long enjoyed as the likely successor to General Secretary Brezhnev.

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Moscow's evening newspaper, *Vechernyaya Moskva*, altered its photograph in a way that deleted Kirilenko's presence among the leadership on the reviewing stand for the May Day parade. The major Moscow newspapers, however, showed Kirilenko in his customary place--fourth in the lineup, after Brezhnev, Premier Kosygin, and senior Party Secretary Suslov.

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This is the latest in a series of slights that Kirilenko has suffered since late last year and his status has been a matter of considerable speculation since his protege, Yakov Ryabov, was removed from the party Secretariat in mid-April. Kirilenko has continued to perform his usual duties, although he failed to appear with Brezhnev at a series of games for the international hockey championship during the latter half of April.

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It is not clear who is benefiting from these anti-Kirilenko maneuvers. Konstantin Chernenko, who is close to Brezhnev and has been promoted rapidly in the past three years, is an obvious beneficiary, but his standing also appears in doubt. In the May Day lineup, for example, Chernenko slipped to next to last.

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What we are seeing may be only a small portion of the jockeying for position as Brezhnev's health declines. During his recent illness, rumors circulated in Moscow that the senior leadership was making contingency plans to replace Brezhnev if it became necessary. When Brezhnev recovered, these discussions were said to have come to an abrupt halt. Senior members of the leadership nevertheless are probably acutely aware of the need to prepare for an orderly distribution of Brezhnev's responsibilities and are conscious of the uncertainties that these preparations introduce into their own careers.

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ANGOLA: UNITA Insurgency

The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola is the only effective Angolan insurgent group, and its operations continue to force government and Cuban troops to fight in unfriendly tribal regions far from command and support centers. A spokesman for UNITA recently announced in Lisbon that the organization is joining with the National Front for the Liberation of Angola to form a "broad front" to oppose the government. The creation of the front seems more a publicity move than a serious effort to unify the two groups.

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UNITA's frequent raids on the Benguela Railroad have disrupted its operations, drawn attention to UNITA's capabilities, and embarrassed Angolan authorities. UNITA has the capability to wage an effective insurgency for the foreseeable future without assistance from other insurgents or substantial aid from foreign governments. UNITA leaders recognize they cannot militarily defeat the Angolan Army with its Cuban reinforcements, but they believe they can eventually force the government in Luanda to make major political concessions.

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The UNITA spokesman who announced the formation of the "broad front" also said that talks aimed at cooperation are continuing with Angolan insurgents in Cabinda and with dissidents from Angola's ruling party. He told US Embassy officers in Lisbon that UNITA still hopes to reach an accommodation with the government, but that it continues to insist that Cuban troops must withdraw from Angola. Based on the Angolan dissidents' past unsuccessful efforts at cooperation, we do not expect much to come of UNITA attempts to make common cause with the other, weaker opposition groups.

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VENEZUELA: OPEC Proposal

Venezuela intends to propose at the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries ministerial conference in Geneva next month a "new mechanism" to help developing nations finance their petroleum imports. The three-month-old administration of President Herrera is taking this approach as an alternative to bilateral assistance--in particular, preferential pricing--which a number of Venezuela's Latin American oil customers have requested.

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The smaller countries in Latin America, especially those in the Caribbean and Central America, have become increasingly critical of Venezuela's role in OPEC price hikes. The Venezuelan Energy Minister is touring the Arab OPEC countries to discuss another increase in oil prices this summer, which Caracas favors, in addition to promoting the new proposal as a way of deflecting complaints by developing countries.

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Although it is sympathetic to the Latin American countries' financial hardship, the Herrera government has so far ruled out direct assistance. This stand is in marked contrast to that of former President Perez, who committed about \$1 billion in bilateral assistance after the 1973-74 oil price rise.

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It is not clear exactly what Herrera has in mind. He may be urging that OPEC increase its \$1 billion Special Fund, liberalize the eligibility requirements for obtaining a loan, or eventually establish an OPEC bank. Although several Latin American countries have received loan commitments for small amounts, the Fund generally has favored African and Asian countries.

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Herrera's new proposal is probably at best a temporary palliative and is therefore unlikely to convince the developing nations of Venezuela's continued sympathy, especially in light of Caracas' decision to increase its surcharge on crude by 60 cents.

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USSR: Reactions to SALT II

The Soviet press has indicated Moscow's satisfaction with the basic SALT II agreement and the prospective meeting next month between Presidents Carter and Brezhnev. Soviet publicity, which did not begin until after the agreed announcement was released in Washington and Moscow last Friday, anticipates SALT II's positive impact on other arms control talks and on the overall bilateral relationship, as well as the prospect of starting SALT

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III. [REDACTED]

Soviet reaction has been restrained. Moscow has unequivocally forecast that the Presidents will "approve and sign" the treaty in Vienna but has been otherwise cautious in expressing its expectations for the summit, even characterizing its dates as "tentative." [REDACTED]

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Soviet public and private statements have for some time reflected an awareness of the difficulties the treaty will face in the US Senate, and the Soviet public has been prepared for the possibility of US nonratification. The Soviets are urging the US Administration to bend every effort to secure Senate approval. Candidate Politburo member Ponomarev told visiting US Congressmen last month that Moscow is convinced the treaty can be approved if the Administration advances it "decisively and practically" in Congress. [REDACTED]

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Soviet commentary before last Friday's announcement indicated some notes of irritation with the Administration's attitude, but since then Soviet reporting on Presidential and other official US statements has been more positive. Moscow has indicated publicly that SALT III must await ratification of SALT II, although Brezhnev has apparently expressed willingness in private to begin SALT III immediately. Moscow has not yet directly addressed the consequences of Senate rejection. [REDACTED]

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IRAN: Clerics Against the Press

Ayatollah Khomeini and his clerical hardliners are taking action to muzzle the Iranian press, which since the fall of the monarchy has enjoyed substantial freedom. This move, combined with threats against those Westernized Iranians who have been unenthusiastic about the Islamic revolution, will further widen the rift between Khomeini's adherents and middle-class moderates.

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A widely circulated, somewhat left-leaning Tehran daily was forced to cease publication last Saturday after Khomeini denounced its reporting and news dealers refused to distribute it. On Tuesday, Khomeini activists among workers at a second major Tehran daily ousted the editorial staff. Khomeini yesterday publicly approved this action as well as that of the news dealers, and the two remaining significant dailies now appear thoroughly intimidated.

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Islamic zealots in the provinces have followed the Tehran example and have attacked several newspaper offices. An ayatollah in Tabriz, the major city in the northwest, has ordered the burning of all "objectionable" books.

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The move against the press, together with the brisk pace of executions, are indications that fundamentalists in Khomeini's entourage have increased their influence at the expense of those members counseling amnesty and more freedom. Khomeini and his associates in the Muslim clergy have long been unhappy with the press, but until now they had apparently listened to more Westernized and liberal leaders who argued that open censorship would reflect badly on the revolution.

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The increased intervention of the clergy in press censorship and other secular affairs will further heighten the anxiety of members of the middle and upper classes. Many have already fled the country. Others, particularly university students, probably will join leftists groups that oppose the government. The Marxist Peoples' Fedayeen has strongly condemned press censorship and the moderate National Democratic Front is planning a protest rally for Saturday.

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CHAD: Another Peace Conference

Nigeria plans to hold another meeting early next week to arrange a political settlement of the protracted struggle between Chad's northern Muslims and southern Christians. [REDACTED]

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According to a senior Nigerian official, the conference will include members of Chad's newly installed provisional government--which Nigeria has so far refused to recognize--as well as other participants in an earlier Nigerian-sponsored meeting. That gathering broke up over personal rivalries among the various Muslim leaders and efforts by southern representatives to strengthen their political position. [REDACTED]

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If the new meeting is to succeed, leaders of the provisional government will have to attend. They will probably refuse, however, because they almost certainly believe that Nigeria--along with Libya and Sudan--will try to reduce their authority by trying again to include other factions in the government. The Chadian Government may also prefer to stay home because of growing secessionist sentiment in southern Chad. Southern authorities, who have instructed the French and other Europeans to remain in Moundou--the scene of recently renewed anti-Muslim rioting--may be counting on French intervention should the provisional government move militarily against the south. Some two dozen US missionaries in the area are in no immediate danger. [REDACTED]

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EASTERN EUROPE: Concern Over Pope's Visit

Czechoslovakia is the first East European country to act to contain the expected spillover effect of the visit to Poland of Pope John Paul II from 2 to 10 June. Authorities in Hungary and in the Lithuanian and Ukrainian Soviet Republics are probably also concerned. The Czechoslovak regime has told the Catholic primate, Cardinal Tomasek, that it would prefer he not go to Poland during the visit. Prague has been uneasy about the Pope's impact on Czechoslovak Catholics; late last year it objected to the reading of a papal letter in Czechoslovak churches. A potentially greater problem than visits by individual churchmen is the possibility that large numbers of Czechoslovaks may travel to Poland to see the Pope. To prevent this, both Czechoslovak and Polish authorities will probably consider imposing temporary travel restrictions.

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ASEAN: Refugee Processing Center

A meeting in Indonesia earlier this week to discuss the establishment of a special processing center for Vietnamese refugees ended with general approval of the idea but no concrete plans. Major obstacles to rapid creation of the center are the lack of a complete survey of the proposed site at Galang Island in the Riau Archipelago, the unwillingness of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to provide active support, and the still undefined methods of financing. Acceptance of the concept by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the US, Japan, Australia, and Canada guarantees, however, that efforts to develop the processing center will continue.

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USSR: 1980 Olympics

A Central Committee decree issued on 6 May and two follow-up *Pravda* editorials have called for more sophistication in Soviet propaganda and increased vigilance against foreign ideas. One reason for the urgent propaganda campaign may be the huge influx of foreigners expected during the Olympics next year in Moscow. In an address on 7 May, Moscow party chief Viktor Grishin became the first member of the leadership to betray publicly some nervousness about the political and cultural impact of foreign visitors on Soviet citizens. He said Moscow residents should be cordial and hospitable toward foreigners who come to the Olympics, but should stress the advantages of the Soviet way of life and "repulse the propaganda of alien ideas and principles." Grishin coupled his remarks with a complaint about Soviet literary works, many of which he described as "ideologically weak."

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SPECIAL ANALYSIS

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EL SALVADOR: The Popular Revolutionary Bloc

[REDACTED]

//The surge of militant protests in El Salvador is largely the work of the Popular Revolutionary Bloc, a coalition of radical leftist organizations. Representing peasants, workers, teachers, and students, the Bloc has grown in four years into a mass-based front for El Salvador's leading terrorist group. The phenomenal growth of the Bloc is a reflection of rising popular resistance to the country's rigid political and social systems and the extreme poverty of the majority.// [REDACTED]

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El Salvador's successive military-led regimes have allied themselves with the country's economic oligarchy. Fraudulent elections have deprived moderate opposition groups of an effective voice in politics. The security forces have responded to terrorist violence with arbitrary arrests and torture. In the last two or three years, economic growth has slackened, aggravating the effects of poverty. Even the long-docile peasantry is showing a marked trend toward political activism. [REDACTED]

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The Popular Revolutionary Bloc grew out of a confrontation in early 1975 between security forces and students that left a number of dead and injured. The nucleus of today's coalition was formed by student groups and peasant organizations together with the militant teachers' union--a thorn in the government's side even in the early 1970s when the Salvadoran scene was relatively calm. [REDACTED]

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Membership in the Bloc reportedly has doubled in the past two years, with current estimates ranging from 30,000 to 75,000. In addition to the National Association of Salvadoran Educators, the largest components are the Christian Federation of Salvadoran Peasants and the Union of Rural Workers, whose members on occasion have clashed with progovernment paramilitary forces in the countryside. [REDACTED]

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The Bloc's tactics have included propaganda, public marches and demonstrations, and the occupation of government buildings, foreign embassies, and churches. These activities have gradually become bolder and more successful. This year, the Bloc orchestrated a May Day demonstration of some 8,000 marchers. The precedent for the recent occupation of the Costa Rican, French, and Venezuelan Embassies as well as the cathedral in San Salvador and a number of churches was set in April 1978 when the Bloc seized four embassies and the cathedral to demand the release of political prisoners.

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//The Bloc's increasing involvement in labor unrest poses a greater potential threat than its previous public activities. In two labor-management conflicts this year, striking industrial workers reinforced by Bloc members seized and held hostages until their demands were met. In the first strike, in January, the Bloc effectively took over the union's role in the bargaining process. The second strike, in March, was accompanied by disruptive Bloc-led street demonstrations that sparked violent clashes with security forces and a wave of sympathetic work stoppages in other industries, including crippling power black-outs.//

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